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Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 4 October 2005, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Butagira ..... (Uganda)
later: Mr. Anshor (Vice-Chairman) ..... (Indonesia)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 61: Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly (*continued*) (A/60/80 and A/60/111)

Agenda item 62: Social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family (*continued*) (A/60/61-E/2005/7, A/60/117, A/60/128, A/60/133 and Corr.1, A/60/138, A/60/155, A/60/156, A/60/290 and A/60/377-E/2005/92)

Agenda item 63: Follow-up to the International Year of Older Persons: Second World Assembly on Ageing (*continued*) (A/60/151 and A/60/377-E/2005/92)

1. **Mr. Chowdhury** (Bangladesh) said that his Government remained deeply committed to advancing social development, in line with the Copenhagen commitments and the development goals. Bangladesh had the highest primary school enrolment rates in the developing world and had already achieved gender parity in both primary and secondary schools. Poverty rates had fallen from over 70 per cent in 1971 to less than 42 per cent in 2004, and child mortality had been substantially reduced. Although much had been achieved, it was clear that society could not be fully transformed unless the problem of impoverished families was addressed. It was therefore urgent that the international community should make a concerted effort to end poverty, which affected 500 million people in South Asia alone.

2. His delegation was pleased to note that the Ad Hoc Committee on a Comprehensive and Integral Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities had made significant progress in drafting the convention. However, it felt that the developing countries were not technically and financially prepared to become parties to it. For its part, Bangladesh had enacted the Disability Welfare Act in 2001 and had taken many pragmatic steps to improve the quality of life of the disabled.

3. Ageing remained a problem for both the developed and the developing countries. Bearing in mind the importance of capacity-building at the national level and of mainstreaming the elderly into national development agendas, the Government had instituted several programmes to provide old-age allowances, old-age homes, and allowances for widows and abandoned women. According to the World Youth Report 2005, South Asia had the largest number of youth living in poverty. Bangladesh had developed several programmes to improve their situation, such as vocational training, self-employment, and youth involvement in community development.

4. **Mr. Saeed** (Sudan) said that, despite all the efforts made nationally and internationally in the ten years since Copenhagen, the gap remained vast between objectives and achievements in counteracting poverty and unemployment and ensuring social integration. The international community should do more to support regional efforts for economic and social development and should display the political will to overcome all existing obstacles and to honour any commitments given. The Sudan welcomed the 2005 World Summit's reaffirmation of the importance of the Millennium Development Goals and its call for alleviation of the burden of debt on poorer countries in order to spur their development. In promoting development, the Sudan sought to emphasize the importance of the individual.

5. A peace agreement to put an end to the war in the south of the Sudan had been reached and should assist in promoting stability and security. The country sought regional peace and endeavoured to promote the conditions to stabilize the situation. His Government supported both the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002, which, if implemented fully would ensure greater social integration, and the efforts undertaken by the meeting in Qatar to address the problem of ageing. His Government also endorsed the Secretary-General's report on the measures taken since the preceding session to follow up the Second World Assembly for Ageing.

6. The discussions of the Third Committee should focus on social development and reaffirm the commitments given to end poverty and unemployment, ensure social complementarity and define priorities at the national and international levels.

7. **Ms. Okagaki** (Japan) said that her delegation fully supported the outcome document of the Commission for Social Development, which reaffirmed that people must be at the centre of development efforts. Japan believed that the United Nations needed

to encourage national ownership, based on a human-centred approach, in partnerships between developing countries and the international community. Her Government attached great importance to the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and had taken several socio-economic measures to tackle the problems of its rapidly ageing society, including continuous employment for persons up to the age of 65, re-employment of the elderly, reform of the pension and medical-care systems, and grants for educational and social activities.

8. With regard to persons with disabilities, her delegation had been participating actively in the negotiations of the Ad Hoc Committee concerned with the convention on the rights of persons with disabilities and had promoted cooperation with non-governmental organizations. In 2004, the Government had amended its disability law to include articles on the prohibition of discrimination against persons with disabilities and to allow the latter to participate more fully in policymaking. With respect to the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond, the World Youth Report 2005 had identified several new issues which needed to be addressed. Japan hoped that the upcoming plenary meeting would provide an opportunity to focus on those issues. Lastly, Japan wished to reaffirm its commitment to creating a secure society where all people would be protected and empowered.

9. **Mr. Effah-Apenteng** (Ghana), expressed regret that the goal of creating a just social system for all had not yet been realized. Sub-Saharan Africa, where poverty, malnutrition, unemployment, under-employment and conflict had led to a significant shortfall in health and educational services, continued to present the world with the most formidable and daunting development challenges. It did, however, seem that Africa was at a turning point: stronger leadership was emerging, African countries were assuming ownership of their development programmes, and economic and social performance was improving.

10. His Government had adopted measures aimed at accelerating growth, poverty reduction and human development and strengthening governance, respect for human rights and the rule of law. In addition, it was pursuing policies to stimulate economic growth by strengthening the private sector, expanding non-traditional exports, investing in infrastructure, making agriculture more productive and improving access to education, health and economic opportunity for the poor and disadvantaged, including women and the aged.

11. The Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy was aimed at implementing a comprehensive set of programmes to support growth and poverty reduction between 2003 and 2005. In 2004 his Government had increased spending in the social sector and strengthened basic services for the poor with a view to meeting the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. At the end of December 2004, 30 per cent of total Government expenditure was linked to direct actions for the poor, focusing on basic human development services and employment-generating activities.

12. In the educational sector, the free, compulsory and universal basic education policy ensured that primary education was widely accessible and free schooling had been extended to cover kindergarten beginning in the 2006/07 academic year. Primary school enrolment had increased to 86 per cent in the 2003/04 academic year although some gender disparity still existed, with enrolment rates for girls and boys being 83 per cent and 89 per cent respectively in 2003-2004. Government efforts to reduce the financial burden on poor parents, including grants, and provision of uniforms and rations, appeared to be working since the basic education completion rate had risen to 78 per cent in 2003-2004.

13. In the health sector, the previous fee for services system, which had denied many people access to medical care, had been replaced by a national health insurance scheme in order to meet the basic health-care needs of Ghanaians. In order to support youth, his Government had established the National Youth Fund aimed at encouraging young people to start their own small enterprises. The current focus was on advancement of the President's vision of human resources development through employment, income generation and poverty reduction. He hoped that the 10-year review of the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond would highlight measures to guarantee the well-being of youth, the world's future leaders.

14. After expressing renewed support for the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and the African Union's Regional Plan of Action on Ageing, he noted that despite recent efforts by the United Nations system

to support national and regional initiatives, the lack of capacity-building, implementation strategies and technical cooperation was hampering implementation and renewed support for action on ageing was required. He stressed the need to safeguard the family and support international initiatives aimed at improving the situation of families and expressed support for the work of the Ad Hoc Committee responsible for drafting a convention on the rights of persons with disabilities.

15. In recognition of the fact that significant national poverty reduction could not be achieved without accelerated economic growth, his Government aimed to increase the productive capacity of the poor and vulnerable and had allocated approximately 32 per cent of total Government expenditure for poverty-related programmes. It had adopted a people-oriented social development policy aimed at expanding employment, reducing poverty, eliminating inequality and promoting access to health care and education.

16. Success in building social safety networks and promoting social development depended on sustainable external support in the form of an improved external economic environment or increased capital flows. His delegation therefore fully supported the effective integration of economic and social policies into macroeconomic policies at the national and international levels in order to strengthen social development. It stressed the need for the international community to further the achievement of social development goals through the provision of technical and financial resources and the elimination of the debt burden, thereby allowing developing countries to redirect resources to social goals. Lastly, he called for speedy implementation of the measures aimed at meeting the special needs of Africa, as advocated in the 2005 World Summit Outcome, which would facilitate equitable economic and social development in a globalized world.

17. **Mr. Chernenko** (Russian Federation) said that, development was threatened not only by the challenges posed by globalization but also by poverty, natural disasters and pandemics. Any one of those problems could escalate into conflict, thereby threatening life and security. The Russian Federation agreed that security, human rights and development were interdependent and hoped that the decisions taken at the forty-third session of the Commission for Social Development would give a new impetus to international cooperation in the social sphere.

18. The development of effective social policies was a key element of the Russian Federation's economic reform. The market-oriented reform of social entitlements had been completed and new reforms had been planned in the areas of health, education and housing. Other priorities of the Government included reducing poverty and increasing wages for the public sector. With respect to demographic policy, one of the main objectives was to strengthen the role of the family and provide support for young families in particular.

19. The Russian Federation was pleased that substantial progress had been made in the negotiations with respect to the proposed convention on the rights of persons with disabilities. It also supported the drafting of an optional protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights which was of a particularly urgent nature, given that conflict situations often arose from a failure to respect those vital rights.

20. **Mr. Baali** (Algeria) said that universal awareness of the relevance of social issues and the threat they could pose to international security had made social development a universal concern and had induced the international community to adopt the Programme of Action in favour of the most vulnerable social sectors and population groups at the World Summit for Social Development in 1995. The goals of the Copenhagen Programme of Action, consistent with the Millennium Development Goals, aimed to eradicate extreme poverty, achieve full employment, promote social integration, guarantee equality between men and women and afford access to quality education and primary health care through national efforts and international cooperation.

21. The recent 10-year review of the Copenhagen Programme of Action by the Commission for Social Development had shown that the imbalances among and within regions and countries, far from being redressed, had been exacerbated, with some countries posting considerable economic growth and others seeing their social conditions deteriorate. Those imbalances had been underscored in the *Report on the World Social Situation, 2005*, which had placed much of the blame on globalization.

22. In truth, only a handful of countries had enjoyed the benefits and sources of wealth created by

globalization, while the majority had felt its negative effects on areas such as employment and wages and, consequently, on their citizens' social situation. The integration of a social dimension into their national macroeconomic policies had not produced the expected results, precisely because of the restructuring policies and unfair competition occasioned by globalization. Clearly, what was now required, in addition to a grasp of the impact of globalization so as better to curb its negative effects, was support for States' national efforts through equitable cooperation that would redress the balance of globalization and distribute its benefits more fairly and evenly.

23. Those imbalances were most profound between developed countries and Africa, which lagged far behind in terms of development and growth and where social conditions were least favourable. The spread of poverty, persistent unemployment and under-employment and inadequate health and education services were the realities described by the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa. The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), in its efforts to fill the gap between Africa and the developed countries, had, in consultation with the heads of State of the African Union countries, identified practical actions for integrating Africa into the global economy and attaining its social objectives. However, even with the financial resources of NEPAD the African countries' collective and individual resources were too meagre to implement those actions; and he therefore called for international solidarity in support of Africa's progress. Concessions that the developed countries could make to Africa included meeting their official development assistance (ODA) commitments, debt cancellation and the conversion of debt into equity investments.

24. Algeria, for its part, was determined to meet its Copenhagen commitments and had integrated the social dimension into its macroeconomic policy. It had thus gradually improved its citizens' living conditions. It had reduced poverty by identifying the poorest population groups and safeguarding and promoting social solidarity. Innovative measures had succeeded in reducing unemployment while education — free and compulsory — was guaranteed for everyone. In its efforts to improve the social situation of its citizens, Algeria not only ensured equality between men and women, but also catered to all vulnerable groups through specific intersectoral programmes for expediting their integration and participation in society on the same footing as other citizens.

25. The heads of State attending the 2005 World Summit had renewed their trust in the Organization's pursuit of the purposes and principles enshrined in its Charter, among them the guarantee of economic and social development, as well as their commitment to enhance international solidarity and cooperation in that area. So, too, had the Commission for Social Development in its conclusions, as reflected in document A/60/80. Algeria fully supported those conclusions and hoped that action would give practical effect to the commitments made at the World Summit and meet the expectations of peoples.

26. *Mr. Anshor (Indonesia), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.*

27. **Mr. Alday** (Mexico) said that his Government had developed a social policy that viewed poverty as an integral, multidimensional phenomenon embracing people's entire life span. Recent efforts had focused on improving social and poverty indicators through an innovative and efficient social policy based on a strategy that effectively targeted the causes of poverty, put people at the centre of development and enhanced their capacity to live life to the full. It had thus made significant progress in meeting the main Millennium Development Goals of reducing poverty and hunger, providing universal primary education and reducing the gender gap in education, and reducing the incidence of malaria, tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS.

28. Mexico had actively participated in the regional and international events to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family and had exchanged experiences on current challenges, including poverty and domestic violence, faced by families belonging to different regions and cultures. His Government assigned priority to framing public policies with a family and community perspective, but imposed no single family model. To that end, it had been preparing a Mexican Family Diagnosis as a tool for analysis and policy design and implementation on the basis of specific information. It also set great store by the validity of and respect for the international commitments undertaken with regard to the family.

29. On the subject of persons with disabilities, his delegation would continue to give momentum to the negotiation of the international convention so that it could soon see the light of day as a result of an

inclusive process. Mexico supported the proposal contained in document A/60/290 to identify ways of promoting a disability perspective in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and United Nations development activities. While concurring on the need for synergy in monitoring the implementation of the United Nations disability-specific instruments, his delegation did not think that the proposal to review all mandates older than five years to see whether they were still genuinely needed was in itself the best way of achieving it. Rather, the report (A/60/290) should have provided a more in-depth analysis that could help States with their decisions and policies for implementing the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons and contribute to progress in respect of the rights and equality of opportunities of such persons.

30. Regarding young people, Mexico supported the comprehensive approach of the World Youth Report 2005 (A/60/61) and concurred with its proposals. The Government, mindful of the strategic role of young people in the country's development, was taking action to improve their living conditions in accordance with the World Programme of Action for Youth. Mexico had now joined those countries that included young people in their delegation to the General Assembly so as better to give voice to the views of that important sector of society in a multilateral external policy forum.

31. Turning to the subject of older persons, he said his Government was generating favourable conditions for improving their quality of life, with the focus on job creation so that they could be productively employed as long they wished, thus fulfilling the commitments of the World Assembly on Ageing. Also, in accordance with the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002, Mexico encouraged the integral human development of its older persons, promoting activity among the elderly without discrimination, establishing instruments and mechanisms for their well-being, acknowledging and using their skills, consolidating their autonomy and independence and enhancing their social worth. The National Institute on Ageing had been coordinating the various institutions devoted to care of the elderly, applying cross-cutting principles of joint responsibility, with the participation of civil society and even of persons over 60 years of age.

32. **Mr. Gzual** (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that the objectives of the Copenhagen Summit had not been achieved, as was evident from document A/60/80. A blatant imbalance existed in international social and economic policies, which the international community must redress, since otherwise international instability would threaten future peace and security. Growing populations, climactic change and natural disasters had profoundly affected agricultural productivity. The problems of food and hunger were likely to continue, with developing countries most severely affected because they were least able to overcome them. Because of increased travel, there had been an unprecedented growth in the incidence of infectious diseases, including AIDS, SARS and avian influenza, which had had a negative impact on social and economic development in developing countries.

33. Developing countries were concerned at the lack of enthusiasm shown by their developed partners in facilitating technology transfers for development purposes, which left them marginalized and unable to make social and economic progress. They required access to markets to help them achieve development objectives. Domestically, they should focus on education and health, giving due attention to the gender perspective; establish a culture of peace, tolerance and dialogue to prevent civil and ethnic conflicts, and resist monopolies imposed in the name of globalization.

34. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya stood by the commitments it had made at the Copenhagen World Summit and had adopted measures and policies designed to implement them. By deploying human resources in an appropriate way, the Government had prioritized educational and training programmes and the provision of free health-care services, social security for widows, the disabled, the elderly and those without a provider.

35. **Mr. Mercado** (Philippines) said that, since genuine development was people-centred, in accordance with the Millennium Development Goals, his country would continue to pursue policies consistent with the overarching social development objectives embodied in the major United Nations documents. In addition to the President's 10-point development agenda for the coming six years to fight poverty and build prosperity for most Filipinos, the Government was also intensifying its implementation of the Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan for the period 2004-2010 with more focused action strategies that provided a blueprint for sustainable

socio-economic development and embodied the country's anti-poverty and overall framework.

36. Despite the Government's significant achievements, there was an urgent need for support for efforts to build an enabling environment for social development in order to achieve the three core priorities of the Copenhagen agenda and a need to integrate social policy into economic policy in order to foster overall development. He therefore called on the relevant actors to ensure that macroeconomic strategies matched the social dimensions of development. Serious efforts must be made to help countries achieve social development through the provision of both technical and financial resources. It was crucial that the developed countries should meet their ODA commitment of 0.7 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) for reducing poverty in the developing countries.

37. However, other ways of funding social development must be sought since ODA alone could not be the main source. In that regard, he urged developed and international financial institutions to give serious consideration to the proposal made by his country at the recent high-level segment of the Commission for Social Development that they should convert 50 per cent of an agreed portion of indebted countries' debt-service payments into equity investments in recipient countries to be channelled towards social development and other programmes to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, thus directly creating and supporting social programmes as well as eliminating the debilitating debt burden and freeing up national funds for investment in such programmes. Such a plan would hasten achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, primarily by halving the number of people living in extreme poverty by 2015.

38. Recognizing the rights of different sectors of society, especially vulnerable sectors, the Philippines continued to pursue policies aimed at a "society for all" and to seek ways of enabling those sectors to participate actively and productively in society. The various plans and programmes adopted a strategic approach to ensure respect for the rights of all people and their equal participation in the development process. Genuine and equitable growth could be achieved by ensuring that the benefits of development programmes reached even marginalized sectors, promoting decent and productive employment and making for a truly inclusive society.

39. Increased cross-border movements signalled the need for effective international cooperation for managing that aspect of globalization and for broader understanding of the linkage among globalization, development and migration as it related to migrants' increased exposure to risks of all sorts in a foreign country. The global phenomenon of migration required greater attention and measures to promote and protect the human rights of migrants. With reference to the statement contained in the executive summary of the *Report on the World Social Situation, 2005*, to the effect that higher migration streams engendered and exacerbated migration, while poverty and economic factors remained a major driving force of global migration, he urged the utmost caution regarding claims that migration per se caused inequality. The report, however, had gone on to indicate a positive statistical correlation between migrants' remittances and poverty reduction, thus underscoring the contribution of migration to addressing inequality, especially in developing countries.

40. **Mr. Mekdad** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his Government accorded due importance to achieving the objectives of Copenhagen and Copenhagen +5 and fulfilling the Millennium Development Goals. It welcomed the Secretary-General's report in document A/60/80 but wondered why it overlooked the catastrophic effects of foreign occupation and armed conflict on social development.

41. His country had recently introduced compulsory education, health services and vaccination campaigns across the entire country, resulting in marked decreases in infant and maternal mortality and an increase in life expectancy to 72 years. The National Plan for 2001-2005 had, as one of its goals, the activation of women's role in family and society. The Syrian Authority for Family Affairs had been established to accelerate improvements in the Syrian family and to promote the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

42. To achieve development and provide employment, especially for the young, steps had been taken to revive investment and reform the educational system. Legislation had been introduced with the aim of creating job opportunities and establishing a public body to combat unemployment. Legislation had also

been introduced to protect the rights of the elderly. A national plan for their health care had been established and Syria sought to implement the objectives of the Second World Assembly for Ageing. Disability was accorded special importance. The first regional conference on the Special Olympics for those with mental disabilities had been convened recently in Syria, concluding with a series of recommendations for a strategy to deal with such disabilities.

43. The next development plan, 2006-2010, would concentrate on human development and achieving the Millennium Development Goals. However, the continued occupation by Israel of the Golan and the resulting drain on Syrian human and financial resources made social development difficult because of the deterioration of economic, humanitarian, and social conditions in the Arab occupied territories.

44. **Mr. Kim** Il-Suk (Republic of Korea) said that social development was not only a social, political and economic goal but also an ethical imperative. Social development did not mean merely increased wages or employment; all three pillars of social development — poverty eradication, full and productive employment and social integration — must be pursued. Although significant progress had been achieved since the World Summit for Social Development, much more needed to be done.

45. He expressed support for the Declaration on the tenth anniversary of the World Summit for Social Development adopted by the Commission for Social Development at its forty-third session and stressed that true social development was people-centred, which implied empowering people and generations so that they could lead better, healthier, more productive and more satisfying lives; that in turn would help create a more just, equitable and inclusive society.

46. He expressed concern, however, that while poverty eradication had, quite rightly, been treated with urgency, the two pillars of employment and social integration had to some extent taken a back seat. In trying to increase employment opportunities and access to resources, it was imperative that the unfair distribution of assets, services and opportunities likewise be addressed. His Government, for example, concerned at the growing youth unemployment rate, was implementing programmes to provide high-quality jobs to help young people develop skills and acquire experiences that would benefit others. Furthermore, in both the private and public sectors, women had taken on greater responsibilities and policies to promote women's employment and participation would continue to be implemented.

47. Varying degrees of economic progress within and among nations and regions had exacerbated social exclusion and put strains on families, societies and institutions. Armed conflict had also had a debilitating effect on social integration. Those factors made it more difficult to put people at the centre of social development, and groups with special needs, such as women with disabilities, became increasingly marginalized. Their rights must be protected, and he therefore called for the inclusion of a separate article on women with disabilities in the proposed international convention on the rights of persons with disabilities.

48. Another social group which required attention was the elderly. His Government had enacted a law regarding the care of the elderly living at home and was implementing plans not only to provide adequate care for senior citizens but also to harness their vast experience and knowledge for the benefit of society as a whole in order to help the elderly lead more satisfying and productive lives. The Ministry of Health and Welfare had been reorganized to better coordinate policies regarding the ageing population and a presidential commission on ageing and the future was devising long-term policies to take into account various social and economic needs and changing global trends and developments. Continuous efforts to incorporate and mainstream social integration issues involving the elderly and children in particular, were of the utmost importance.

49. **Archbishop Migliore** (Holy See) said that increased longevity called for a rethinking of the role of the elderly in society and in the development process. It would be politic to create a wide range of opportunities that used the potential, experiences and expertise of older persons so that they could remain connected to society and continue to make their mark in the world either through voluntary or remunerated work. Perhaps, the chief factor in preventing their stigmatization and exclusion was the continued appreciation of their presence by their own families.

50. In many societies care for dependent or sick persons was provided by older people; in that context, it was important that their own access to primary health

care, centred on their medical needs and adequate nutrition, should be integrated into the wider development process and include a safety net to cope with inadequate social schemes. Conceding that Governments and private institutions were mainly responsible for social protection of the elderly, the Holy See — while itself supporting older persons through various programmes run by Catholic agencies in thousands of facilities in the developing countries — reaffirmed the importance of the family for their overall security and their mental, physical and spiritual health.

51. Compassion, love, respect, appreciation and affection were also important for older persons; he therefore urged that those values should be taught in schools, practised in the home and promoted in the media. Also, a basic social pension and the protection of pension rights could provide support for the elderly, especially in low-income countries, where their nutritional status was threatened by poverty, onerous family responsibilities and age-related disabilities.

52. With the transition from a high-fertility regime to one of low population growth in developed and developing countries alike, the numbers of the elderly were expected to treble by 2050 and one third of them to be living in developing countries by 2030. The lessons to be drawn were that every country must become or remain a "society for all ages" and that extra caution was needed when fiscal and international policies entered the realm of human engineering.

53. **Mr. Dall'oglio** (International Organization for Migration (IOM)) recalled that the Copenhagen Programme of Action had recognized the special situation of international migrants. A wide range of social integration issues requiring action had been highlighted, and he welcomed the attention devoted to migrants in the 2005 World Summit Outcome. The high-level dialogue on migration and development to be held in September 2006 would provide an opportunity to pursue concerted efforts to maximize the benefits of international migration while addressing its challenges.

54. The comprehensive and integrated approach to development adopted by the United Nations system, which ensured that social and economic issues were tackled coherently and social objectives were mainstreamed into economic policymaking, was particularly crucial with regard to migrants, who were at times considered to be mere factors of production. Since the integration process was first and foremost a personal one, for social partnerships played an important role. The private sector, employers' associations and social actors must address discrimination against migrants and ensure their productive participation in workplaces and local communities.

55. The successful integration of migrants, on a temporary or permanent basis, provided opportunities and challenges for the receiving countries and fostered diversity, creativity, growth and economic development. If the integration experience was not successfully managed, however, it could lead to social and cultural conflict and affect social cohesion. The impact of migration depended on factors such as society's acceptance of cultural diversity, the level of interaction between migrants and the local population, the extent and pace at which foreigners settled into their new environment and the degree of adjustment required by host communities in the process of mutual adaptation. Since no model was applicable to all countries, although core issues could be similar, his Organization had developed initiatives to facilitate the exchange of information in order to increase understanding of integration issues.

56. The integration of migrants was a source of debate in both traditional and new countries of immigration, particularly in view of recent security concerns and the growth of migration in recent years. New initiatives had therefore emerged to promote cooperation and exchange good practices both centrally and locally. At the international level, they included: the Berne initiative, an intergovernmental process to develop a policy framework for the management of migration; the International Labour Organization proposed plan of action on migrant workers; his own organization's international dialogue on migration; and the concrete measures to further global migration governance of the Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM) which would present its recommendations the following day.

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.